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FM AMEMBASSY LONDON
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 3889
INFO RUCNMEM/EU MEMBER STATES COLLECTIVE
RHEBAAA/DEPT OF ENERGY WASHINGTON DC
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 LONDON 002492

NOFORN
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E.O. 12958: DECL: 09/21/2019
TAGS: [ECON](#) [ENRG](#) [UK](#)
SUBJECT: CONSERVATIVE PARTY PLANS TO ABOLISH THE UK
INFRASTRUCTURE PLANNING COMMISSION

REF: LONDON 1514

Classified By: Economic Minister Counselor Richard Albright for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d) 1. (C/NF) Summary. The Conservative Party is planning the UK PLANNING ACT SEEKS TO SPEED THINGS UP -----

12. (SBU) The case for radical change in the UK planning process is not new. Prior to the passage of the 2008 Planning Act, planning decisions

13. (SBU) The Planning Act was approved by the UK Parliament in November 2008. This legislation reforms the UK planning process by removing planning decisions from the IPC TO BASE DECISIONS ON NATIONAL POLICY STATEMENTS -----

14. (SBU) The Planning Law calls for the IPC's decisions on planning applications to be guided by twelve National Policy Statements (NPSs). The

15. (SBU) All twelve NPSs will receive public comment and scrutiny by Parliament. DECC's Director of Planning and Consents Richard Mellish expects the IPC EXPECTED TO SPEED UP PROCESS, RAISE ETHICAL STANDARDS -----

16. (SBU) HMG expects the IPC to improve ethics on planning applications, since commissioners are required to be LONDON 00002492 002 OF 003

17. (SBU) The IPC, once operational on March 1, 2010, will review planning applications and provide the requested decision for large infrastructure projects. PERSONNEL BEING GATHERED TO RUN THE IPC -----

18. (SBU) The IPC's headquarters is located in Bristol and its leadership is already in place. The budget for the IPC for 2009/2010 is 10 million. SUPPORT -- AND SKEPTICISM -- FROM STAKEHOLDERS -----

19. (SBU) John Cridland, Deputy Director General of the Confederation of Business Industries (CBI), stated on July 20 that the 2008 Planning Act

10. (C/NF) Despite the general support for planning reforms, HMG's delay in publishing the NPSs is disconcerting to some. Labour MP Jamie Reed says the CONSERVATIVE PARTY'S PLAN TO SCRAP THE IPC -----

11. (SBU/NF) While the Conservative Party's opposition to the IPC is well-known among stakeholders and politicians, the party passed a policy

12. (C/NF) Labour MP Jamie Reed, who sat on the House of Commons Planning Committee temporarily formed to evaluate the 2008 Planning Law, told the COMMENT -----

13. (C/NF) If the Conservative Party wins the next election and carries through with its promise to eliminate the IPC, some businesses, including Susman